Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): I have already answered the question.

COCHINITES—S. I. R. SERVICE.

157. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar (*Nellayi*): Will the Government be pleased to state the number of Cochinites in the service of the South Indian Railway at present?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): There are about 36,000 employees on the South Indian Railway. Government consider that the labour involved in ascertaining the number of Cochinites among them would be out of all proportion to the value of the information obtained.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar (*Nemmara*): Has the Government any idea as to whether any Cochinite is employed in the S. I. R. service?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): Yes, many.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar (*Nemmara*): Can't they at least get the approximate number of the Cochinites employed by the S. I. R. and the posts to which they were employed?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): We have no information.

Mr. M. K. Devassy (*Adur*): Do the Government really think that the information asked for is absolutely unnecessary when they say that the labour involved would be out of all proportion to the value of information obtained?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): Considering the length of the line, the huge number of the employees under S. I. R. and the places where they are employed, Government think that the labour involved is really very much.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar (*Nemmara*): Is it the labour on the part of the Cochin Government or the S. I. R?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): Certainly on the part of S. I. R. They have to collect all the information. If we call for the information, they will say we should have additional staff and in that case we will have to pay more.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar (*Nemmara*): May I know whether actually any request was made to them?

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Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): Yes. It was on the basis of their reply that this answer was supplied.

Mr. M. K. Devassy (*Adur*): So, without additional staff we can't get this information. Is that the contention of the Government ?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): Government think that the position taken by the S. I. R. in this matter, is very reasonable.

Mr. C. R. Iyyunni (*Trichur-South*): Is there any understanding between the Cochin Government and the S. I. R. with regard to the appointments under S. I. R ?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): I do not think there is any.

Mr. C. R. Iyyunni (*Trichur-South*): Will it not be possible for the Government at present to bring some pressure to bear upon the S. I. R. regarding the appointment of Cochinites under them ?

Mr. President: There is nothing in the contract.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (*Chalakkudi*): Are there Cochinites who are drawing more than Rs. 100 in the S. I. R. service ?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): Yes.

Mr. C. R. Iyyunni (*Trichur-South*): Will the Government consider this matter at the time the contract is renewed ?

Dr. D. Raghavendra Rao (*Chief Medical Officer*): I am afraid they will say that the proportion of Cochinites is rather higher.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (*Chalakkudi*): Even in the higher cadres ?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): There is one Mr. Narayana Menon who is an A. T. S. in the Railway.

Mr. President: There are many more.

Mr. C. R. Iyyunni (*Trichur-South*): Our object in asking this question was to see whether we can get some more additional posts in the S. I. R. service. If, as you say, we are going to lose, certainly we will be the last persons to pursue the matter.

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Mr. K. M. Ibrahim (*Cranganur*). How was the Member for Medicine able to know that we are over-represented? The Government were saying that they can't ascertain the number due to the immense labour involved in the collection of statistics.

Mr. President : That is the general impression.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim (*Cranganur*): Sometimes general impression becomes faulty.

SHORNUR-COCHIN RAILWAY - PURCHASE OF TIMBER FOR REPAIRS, ETC.

158. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar (*Nellayi*) : Will the Gover ment be pleased to state :—

(*a*) the amount spent by the S. I. R. for the renewal and repair of sleepers and other wooden materials on the Shornur-Cochin Railway, during the last two years ;

(*b*) the quantity of timber purchased by the Railway Company from the Cochin Government for the above purpose?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*):

(*a*) 1936—37 .... Rs. 56,594
1937—38 .... ,, 80,134

(*b*) Nil.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar (*Nemmara*) : In view of the fact that the whole railway line belongs to the Government, can't they consider the desirability of the S. I. R. purchasing timber from our own forests which is inferior to no other timber ?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar (*Secretary to Government*): In fact most of the timber used for sleepers in our line is from the Cochin forests. But the thing is, we do not supply them direct. They call for tenders and entrust the supply to the lowest tenderer. The contractors get their supply from our own forests.

Mr. T. Narayana Menon (*Conservator of Forests*) : As the Secretary to Government has said, we are supplying most of the timber used for the sleepers. As a matter of fact, it is found to be economical to supply it through the contractors than supplying it direct.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar (*Nemmara*): Am I to understand that the method of supplying directly is dis-advantageous than supplying through the contractors ?

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